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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,072	07/10/2003	William Everett Thinnes	58550.010029	3398
7590	04/02/2004			EXAMINER LAYNO, BENJAMIN
Howard E. Silverman GREENBERG TRAURIG, P.C. Ste. 2500 77 W. Wacker Dr. Chicago, IL 60601			ART UNIT 3712	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 04/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/617,072	THINNES, WILLIAM EVERETT
Examiner	Art Unit	
Benjamin H. Layno	3712	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fienberg in view of Gerow.

The patent to Fienberg discloses an instant-win lottery game comprising a plurality of playing cards 10 having one or more game symbols 18 displayed thereon and a master game card 12. The master game card and the plurality of playing cards have displayed thereon have number symbols 18, 30 for establishing eligibility of one or more selected game players. A number e.g. "113" on the master game card and on the plurality of playing cards identifies selected game players. The master game card further including award identifying means displaying a plurality of award values 36, 40. The award is covered by a concealing means 38. The concealing means is removed to determine the award. A jackpot 42, 44 is established. The master game card has an accumulated jackpot 46.

The patent to Gerow teaches that it is known in the instant-win lottery games for a lottery playing card 42 to identify one game player a the winner an accumulated jackpot by selectively removing a concealing means and revealing if a game player has won the jackpot, see three cherry symbols. In view of such teaching, it would have

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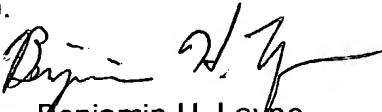
been obvious to incorporate a second award identifying means to Fienberg's lottery game to determine who wins the accumulated jackpot 46. Determining where exactly to place the second award identifying means, concealed on the master game card 12, or concealed on a playing card 10 would have been a casino business decision which is always obvious in the art.

In regard to the claimed "when the accumulated jackpot amount equals a exceeds a predetermined maximum amount and is not awarded to at least one of the selected game players identified by the identifying means" in claim (1), line (24-26), this statement is considered a game rule. In game apparatus claims, only the claimed elements having physical structure, (e.g. playing card, master card, selectively removable means, etc.) are given patentable weight. Game rules, however, have no physical structure per se. Thus, game rules have no limiting affect in game apparatus claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin H. Layno whose telephone number is (703) 308-1815. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 1st Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Derris Banks can be reached on (703) 308-1745. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Benjamin H. Layno
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3712

bhl